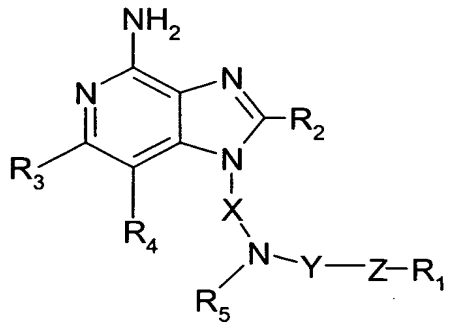
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A compound of the formula (I):



(I)

wherein **X** is alkylene or alkenylene;

Y is –CO– or –CS–;

Z is $–NR_6–$; $-NR_6-CO-$; $-NR_6-SO_2-$; or $-NR_7-$;

$\mathbf{R_1}$ is aryl, heteroaryl, heterocyclyl, alkyl or alkenyl, each of which may be unsubstituted or substituted by one or more substituents independently selected from the group consisting of:

-alkyl;

-alkenyl;

-aryl;

-heteroaryl;

-heterocyclyl;

-substituted cycloalkyl;

-substituted aryl;

-substituted heteroaryl;

substituted heterocyclyl;

-O-alkyl;

$-O-(alkyl)_{0-1}-aryl$;

$-O-(alkyl)_{0-1}-$substituted aryl;

$-O-(alkyl)_{0-1}-$heteroaryl;

$-O-(alkyl)_{0-1}-$substituted heteroaryl;

-O-(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-heterocyclyl;

-O-(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-substituted heterocyclyl;

-COOH;

-CO-O-alkyl;

-CO-alkyl;

-S(O)$_{0-2}$ -alkyl;

-S(O)$_{0-2}$ –(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-aryl;

-S(O)$_{0-2}$ –(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-substituted aryl;

-S(O)$_{0-2}$ –(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-heteroaryl;

-S(O)$_{0-2}$ –(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-substituted heteroaryl;

-S(O)$_{0-2}$ –(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-heterocyclyl;

-S(O)$_{0-2}$ –(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-substituted heterocyclyl;

-(alkyl)$_{0-1}$- N(R_6)$_2$;

-(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-NR_6-CO-O-alkyl;

-(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-NR_6-CO-alkyl;

-(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-NR_6-CO-aryl;

-(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-NR_6-CO-substituted aryl;

-(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-NR_6-CO-heteroaryl;

-(alkyl)$_{0-1}$-NR_6-CO-substituted heteroaryl;

-P(O)(Oalkyl)$_2$;

-N_3;

-halogen;

-haloalkyl;

-haloalkoxy;

-CO-haloalkyl;

-CO-haloalkoxy;

-NO_2;

-CN;

-OH;

-SH; and in the case of alkyl, alkenyl, and heterocyclyl, oxo;

R_2 is selected from the group consisting of:

-hydrogen;
-alkyl;
-alkenyl;
-aryl;
-substituted aryl;
-heteroaryl;
-substituted heteroaryl;
-alkyl-O-alkyl;
-alkyl-S-alkyl;
-alkyl-O-aryl;
-alkyl-S-aryl:
-alkyl-O- alkenyl;
-alkyl-S- alkenyl; and
-alkyl or alkenyl substituted by one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of:
-OH;
-halogen;
-$N(R_6)_2$;
-$CO\text{-}N(R_6)_2$;
-$CS\text{-}N(R_6)_2$;
-$SO_2\text{-}N(R_6)_2$;
-$NR_6\text{-}CO\text{-}C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkyl;
-$NR_6\text{-}CS\text{-}C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkyl;
-$NR_6\text{-}SO_2\text{-}C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkyl;
-$CO\text{-}C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkyl;
-$CO\text{-}O\text{-}C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkyl;
-N_3;
-aryl;
-substituted aryl;
-heteroaryl;
-substituted heteroaryl;
-heterocyclyl;

-substituted heterocyclyl;

-CO-aryl;

-CO-(substituted aryl);

-CO-heteroaryl; and

-CO-(substituted heteroaryl);

$\mathbf{R_3}$ and $\mathbf{R_4}$ are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, alkyl, alkenyl, halogen, alkoxy, amino, alkylamino, dialkylamino and alkylthio;

$\mathbf{R_5}$ is H or $C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkyl, or R_5 can join with X to form a ring that contains one or two hetero atoms;

each $\mathbf{R_6}$ is independently H or $C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkyl;

$\mathbf{R_7}$ is H or $C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkyl which may be interrupted by a heteroatom or when R_1 is alkyl, R_7 and R_1 can join to form a ring;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

2. A compound or salt of claim 1 wherein Y is –CO–.

3. A compound or salt of claim 1 wherein Y is –CO– and R_1 is alkyl, aryl or substituted aryl.

4. A compound or salt of claim 2 wherein R_2 is alkyl-O-alkyl.

5. A compound or salt of claim 2 wherein R_2 is H or alkyl.

6. A compound or salt of claim 1 wherein Y is –CS–.

7. A compound or salt of claim 6 wherein Y is –CS– and R_1 is alkyl, aryl or substituted aryl.

8. A compound or salt of claim 6 wherein R_2 is alkyl-O-alkyl.

9. A compound or salt of claim 6 wherein R_2 is H or alkyl.

10. A compound or salt of claim 9 wherein R_1 is alkyl, aryl, or substituted aryl.

11. A compound or salt of claim 1 wherein X is $-(CH_2)_{2-4}-$.

12. A compound or salt of claim 1 wherein R_1 and R_7 join to form a ring.

13. A compound or salt of claim 1 wherein R_1 and R_7 join to form a morpholine ring.

14. A compound or salt of claim 1 wherein R_5 and R_6 are both hydrogen.

15. A compound or salt of claim 1 wherein R_3 and R_4 are both methyl.

16. A compound or salt of claim 1 wherein R_3 and R_4 are independently H or alkyl.

17. A compound selected from the group consisting of:

N-[4-(4-Amino-2-butyl-6,7-dimethyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-1-yl)butyl]-*N*'-phenylurea;

N-[4-(4-Amino-2-butyl-6,7-dimethyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-1-yl)butyl]-*N*'-phenylthiourea;

N-{4-[4-amino-2-(ethoxymethyl)-6-methyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-1-yl]butyl}morpholin-4-ylcarboxamide;

N-[4-(4-amino-6,7-dimethyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-1-yl)butyl]morpholin-4-ylcarboxamide;

2-(ethoxymethyl)-6,7-dimethyl-1-{2-[1-(morpholin-4-ylcarbonyl)piperidin-4-yl]ethyl}-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-4-amine;

N-[3-(4-amino-2,6,7-trimethyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-1-yl)propyl]morpholin-4-ylcarboxamide;

N-{3-[4-amino-2-(ethoxymethyl)-6,7-dimethyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-1-yl]propyl}morpholin-4-ylcarboxamide;

N-{2-[4-amino-2-(ethoxymethyl)-6,7-dimethyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-c]pyridin-1-yl]-1,1-dimethylethyl}-*N*'-phenylurea

N-{2-[4-amino-2-(ethoxymethyl)-6,7-dimethyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-c]pyridin-1-yl]-1,1-dimethylethyl}morpholin-4-ylcarboxamide; and
N-[2-(4-amino-2,6,7-trimethyl-1*H*-imidazo[4,5-*c*]pyridin-1-yl)ethyl]morpholin-4-ylcarboxamide;
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

18. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 in combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

19. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 2 in combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

20. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 17 in combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

21. A method of inducing cytokine biosynthesis in an animal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 to the animal.

22. A method of treating a viral disease in an animal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 to the animal.

23. A method of treating a neoplastic disease in an animal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 to the animal.

24. A method of inducing cytokine biosynthesis in an animal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 2 to the animal.

25. A method of treating a viral disease in an animal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 2 to the animal.

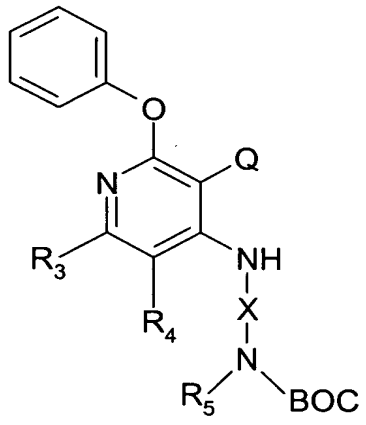
26. A method of treating a neoplastic disease in an animal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 2 to the animal.

27. A method of inducing cytokine biosynthesis in an animal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 17 to the animal.

28. A method of treating a viral disease in an animal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 17 to the animal.

29. A method of treating a neoplastic disease in an animal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 17 to the animal.

30. A compound of the formula (III):



(III)

wherein: **Q** is NO_2 or NH_2;

X is alkylene or alkenylene;

$\mathbf{R_3}$ and $\mathbf{R_4}$ are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, alkyl, alkenyl, halogen, alkoxy, amino, alkylamino, dialkylamino and alkylthio; and

$\mathbf{R_5}$ is H or $C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkyl, or R_5 and X can join to form a ring that contains one or two hetero atoms;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.